### THE RICHMOND DISPATCH. BY THE DISPATCH COMPANY

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VIRGINIA POLITICS.

During this month there will be two occurrences of great political interest in politics. The first will be the meeting of the State Democratic Committee to fix the time and place of, and representation in, our next State con-The other will be the election which will take place on the fourth Thursday in May, at which various local officers are to be elected and the question of "constitutional convention" or "no convention" is to be passed upon by the people.

It has become usual to hold our State nominating convention about the middle State Committee will not depart from that custom. As to the basis of representation, there is quite likely to be some discussion. The convention of four years ago was composed of 1.640 members. By some, it is held that such a membership is too large, and that it is prohibitive of due "deliberation." Eesides, it is contended that such a membership is "in the interest of Richmond," the holding of a very large convention. But be the latter as it may, Richmond is in no wise responsible for the big convention system. The late John S. Barbour, as chairman of our party, is understood to have been the originator of the system in this State, and it is certain that it was his influence which secured the change. Furthermore, he was always of the opinion that the more men we could bring together as delegates and interest in our party's work,

the better it would be for our party. Mr. Barbour had, and we believe de served to have, the reputation of being one of the shrewdest party leaders that our State has ever produced and large conventions have been so popular that all attempts hitherto made to abandon them have proved unsuccessful. The system is backed by the prestige of Mr. Barbour's name and seems also to have met

with pepular approval upon its merits. Not long ago the Dispatch urged that If in any section of the State there was a real desire upon the part of Democrats for a return to the old basis of one delegate for each two hundred Democratic votes cast, our City and County committees should rise and say so; but as yet, there has been no utterance upon the question. However, there is plenty of time yet during which the local committees may act. But in default of some such evidence of the popular wish for a change, we take it for granted that the State Committee will adhere to the basis which has obtained of late years. In that case, our next nominating convention would have 1,279 members, as against 1.610 members in the convention of four years ago. Or if the Bryan vote be adopted in lieu of the last gubernatorial vote, the convention of this year would have 1,550 members as against 1,610 in

Another contested question before the State Committee will be as to the place of meeting of the nominating conven-tion. Richmond, Nortolk, Roanoke, Staunton, and Charlottesville will all be aspirants for the honor. Newport News. too, had intended to be a contestant, but in view of the big fire down there, which has quite naturally absorbed the attention of the community since its occurrence, we do not know what are its present purposes. Its plan was to have half-hourly railroad and street railway service between Old Point, Hampton, and Newport News, thus combining for the occasion the hotel facilities of all three places. We may trust the State Committee, after hearing all that is to be said in behalf of each city that is seeking the honor, to fix upon that one which will best serve the interests of our

And now as to the May election: In nd, the only officer to be voted for is City Treasurer, and for this position it seems the only candidate will be the theumbant. But in some other cities and towns full municipal tickets are to be elected. In the countles Boards of Supervisors, etc., are to be chozen. But it is the constitutional convention question that gives the May lection its chief importance. . On that mbled to revise and amend the Con-

to vote "for" or "against" the convenlon, as they please. Many will support proposition; many will not. Most of the latter regard the present as an opportune time to decide the question, and, furthermore, they would like to have party action setting forth the purposes of the constitutional convention before it is ordered. Among those who are of this opinion is the Dispatch. Wo have long hoped that by assembling a constitutional convention, a revision of the suffrage article might be made, and with great benefit to the State; but with public sentiment in its present condition we could not expect that a convention if called now, would make any change at all. Indeed, some of the foremost advocates of the convention at this time are men who are pronounced against making any change in the suffrage article. However, the vote must be taken

on May 27th, and those upon whom falls the duty of printing the ballots to be used on that occasion should see to it that the advice of the Attorney-General is followed as to the form to be used. Let the wishes of the people be freely heard, no matter whether it be "for" or "against" a convention. But we much fear that in many localities the vote cast will be a small one-as in Richmond, and in numbers of counties, where the Democratic nominees have no opposition and where the aggregate of votes cast will be light.

With the May election over, we shall find ourselves in the midst of the campaign for the Democratic nominations. We are to choose a candidate for Governor, another for Lieutenant-Governor, and another for Attorney-General, and the aspirants are numerous and active enough to make the contest interesting. We expect the nominating convention to pick out the very men that our party and our State need and set them upon a platform which, while conforming to the Chicago platform will deal with the demands of the Virginia people for such retrenchment and reform in legislative appropriations as will make our "buckle

and tongue meet" with case. And all this done, the Democracy of the Old Dominion in November will register another victory as signal as any of the many which have crowned our banners since we routed Mahone and Mahoneism.

#### TALKERS VS. BUYERS.

The "demand" for a history suitable for the instruction of southern youth continues unabated; but obviously many BUNDAY........ MAY 2, 1897. of those who are engaged in making this demand are not aware that there are a ezen or more of such school histories already in existence, any one of which may, with great propriety, be used in

We do not wish to discourage the production of more school histories-believing as we do that the fittest will survive-but we must say that it is time we were buying liberally of the books now offered us. If we cannot find perfection in a history, let us take the best obtainable and use it where it will do most good. Never will we find the minds of the southern youth more receptive than now of historical truths, and the opportunities we let slip will never come

At present there seems to be more real need of a standard southern history for the general reader than for another school history. The works of Mr. Davis and Aleck Stephens, for instance, are admirable in their way, and afford valuable material from which to draw; but neither is "up to date." By this we mean that neither of these authors had any opportunity to consult the War Reas no other Virginia city can compete with ours in offering advantages for United States Government, and which throw a flood of light upon military operations which no historian can afford to ignore. The standard history should embrace not only the fundamental facts which are contained in the works of Mr. Davis and Mr. Stephens and others, but must make use of the material which is to be found only in the War Records.

When such a history as this is written and published, and has found favor with the masses, it may be possible to condense from it a better school history than any we now have-but until then, for goodness sake, let us buy and make use of the best of the numerous school histories already in existence.

Of course, we should like a perfectly impartial history to be written; but to be downright candid, we must say that we don't expect it to be forthcoming soon. The North and South cannot at this time-and probably never will-agree as to what an impartial history is or

It has been considerably over 100 years since the close of the Revolutionary war, but no man has yet written a history of that struggle which satisfies England and America both. Most Englishmen believe that the histories commonly used in the schools of this country are grossly inaccurate and unjust. Certainly, that | be seen. is our opinion of such of the English histories of the War of the Revolution as we have read. If, after the lapse of more than a hundred years, we have no impartial or non-partisan history of the war of 1776, how idle it is to expect that we shall soon have one of the Con-

For the present, we can only hope that some fair-minded man, who has the needful ability, and who is heartily in sympathy with our people, will "take his pen in hand" and give us such a standard outhern history as we need. From this work the historian of the far future may gather such information as he may require to enable him to write the nonpartisan history that seems expected.

The danger of the good-looking typewriter girl is again shown by the testi- plains. mony of Miss Ervin, private secretary and stenegrapher to defaulter Spaulding, of the defunct Globe Savings' Bank, Chicago, before the Senatorial Investigating Committee, to the effect that Spaulding had given her about \$75,000, with the understanding that he was some time later to secure a divorce from his wife and

It looks as if the European Powers had concluded to stand aside in the matter of the Graeco-Turkish war until one or the other of the parties combatant is finally defeated.

We are under obligations to Congressman John Lamb for a pamphlet copy of the address delivered by him before Pickett Camp on the battle of Malyern Hill; also for various public documents.

It is thrilling to think of the number of adjournments the House will have to take if it waits on the Senate till the end of the Dingley bill business.

Gold exports are becoming very heavy again. Is that another sign of McKinley r party has left its members free prosperliy?

MUDDLE AND MYSTERY.

The public mind has no clearer idea to day as to what will be the final settlement of the issue between Greece and Turkey, or how that settlement will be brought about, than it had when the trouble began. The whole wretched business has piled mistake upon mistake; has been a muddle, not to say a mystery, and has presented a succession of contradictions ever since the embers of the old contro versy were fanned into a flame in Crete, and the Powers, in violation of their ob ligations to humanity and to civilization, prevented the annexation of Crete to Greece, thus shirking the responsibility of quenching the flame. The most saplent prophets have from day to day had to hedge on their predictions, and the telegrams from the great European capitals as to the purposes of the concert would seem to indicate a change of tune, and more discord almost every hour.

The more light that is thrown upon the abandonment of Larissa by the Greeks and their retreat to Pharsalos, the more apparent it is that there was no necessity at the time for the movement. Although it had been tooked upon as a foregone conclusion that Greece would not be able to cope successfully with the force Turkey had thrown against her in Thessaly, up to the day of the sudden retreat she had agreeably disappointed the world. Her army in Thessaly was practically intact, and she was carrying on operations in other territory that threatened to put the Turkish invading column into a trap. There now seems little or no question that this was recognized by Turkey, and was the cause of the Sultan's sending to the front Osman Pasha, the hero of Plevna.

But just here the situation changed, and Greece lost all she had gained. She lost not only the prestige her prowess had established and the advantages she had acquired in battle over her foes, whom she was pressing at several important points, but she lost the opportunity of starting a blaze in the Balkans, bringing the Balkan States to her assistance, fomenting insurrection in Macedonia, and forcing the Powers to show their hands, one to another, on the whole Turkish question. We take no stock in the wild charges made by the Athenian mob that the Greek army was sold out. The truth seems to be that some one high in authority in the Greek camp became panic stricken and blundered criminally. Subordinate commanders defending strong strategic positions, and who were confident that they could continue to hold them, were refused reinforcements; a retreat was ordered; other subordinate com manders caught the infection of the pania, and deserted with their columns their posts, without firing a shot, and without disabling their heavy artillery, and the retreat became a rout. In short, there was a disgraceful ending of a glorious

At Athens there has been a change of government, the opposition headed by M Ra'll, who has been the leader in fomenting feeling against the Royal family, coming into power. On the one hand we still have talk of the Powers intervening, but on the other we are told that intervention is impracticable, as both Turkey and Greece have declined to solicit it, and both have expressed a desome quarters it is stated that Turkey to Crete, but the restoration of the boundwould never consent to this, seeing that they are pledged that the aggressor in Inited States Government, and which the actual war shall not profit territorially in the adjustment, and, consequently, as Turkey was the aggressor, the boundary will remain as adopted by the Constantinople conference. This boundary gave Thessaly and a small slice of Epirus to Greece, but ceded to her tess than two thirds of the territorial area guaranteed her by the Powers under the Berlin treaty, and besides throwing Elassona into Turkish territory, robbed Greece of most of the strategic advantages she would have secured by the enforcement of the Berlin pact.

As to pledges of the Powers, we know all too well that in these latter days the Powers only keep their pledges in so far as it is to their interest to do so. and that their shamelessness in breaking them has never been more strikingly illustrated than in their dealings with Greece. Furthermore, in considering the question of final settlement, it should not be forgotten that Abdul Hamid has not lost the art of playing one Power against another, and that the jealousy and fear of the Powers one of another has abated not a whit. From present conditions, it seems probable that the Turks will overrun Greece, while the Powers continue to fiddle out of concert, and that is about as far into the matter as can

### THE TENNESSEE EXPOSITION.

The Tennessee Centennial Exposition at Nashville, which was opened yesterday by President McKinley's pressing a button in the White House to start the machinery, is being held in celebration of the hundredth year of the State's admission to the Union. As a matter of fact, however, the admission took place in 1726, and the exposition was to have taken place last year, but from various causes a delay was unavoidable.

Tennessee was settled by North Carolinians and Virginians, and was a gift of the former State to the Union. And a very beautiful piece of territory it is, too. Its mountain scenery is lovely, and it has many fertile valleys and rich

To celebrate the historical event that we have referred to, and to show forth the abundant resources of its fields and forests, mines and workshops, this exposition was designed and inaugurated. All accounts concur in saying that the exposition buildings and grounds are beautiful, and that the exhibits from Tennessee, from other States, and from other lands are very grand. We feel sure the Exposition is richly worth see-

ing, and we wish it much success. In June the United Confederate Veterans will hold their grand encampment at Nashville, as they did last year in Richmond, and thousands of our old soldiers we hope will avail themselves of that opportunity to meet their former comrades-in-arms, and to see the Exposition as well.

Richmond ought to be handsomely repregented upon the occasion. Hosts of sons and grandsons of the Old Dominion, who are living in the South or Southwest, will gather at Nashville to greet their home-folks. And they will be mightly disappointed if, in the para-le that is to take place, Richmond and Virginia do not make a fine showing.

We ought, indeed, to be repre upon that occasion, not only by our chief

tamps of veterans, but by the flower of Let's canvass the question and make

suitable arrangements. To the Strawberry. O, beautiful gift from the larder of June! When ruddlest flushes thy ripeness pro-

Our welcome hosannas to thee we attune And sweeten our feasts as we chorus thy

But, ah! When in pale adolescence you

Your dew-sparkled, verdurous lair to With the restaurant short-cake, we're

forced to admit That of natural flavor you're awfully

Very Apt. Though womankind as sanderers May strive not for renown, Since they have taken to the wheel They're apt to run us down.

In Senson. Now comes the white-robed aspholel, And orchard's flush with apple-bloom, From out the woodland doth upswell

The cranesbill's delicate perfume; The wary winds grow warier. New robes are on each bough and vine While victims of malaria Despairingly absorb quinine.

Found the Difference. Dumbleton: Newman stopped with us at the club until 1 o'clock last night. He told his wife he was detained at the store, looking for a difference in his books. Flasher: I'll bet he found the difference all right when he got home. .

Looked Like Collusion. Dector: A diagnosis of your wife's case

convinces me that she does not require any medicine. Change is what she needs. Husband: Is it possible that I've got to pay you a fee for endorsing her daily

Getting Used to It. Wife: Will you miss me when I'm gone,

Husband: Not as much as I would have done, love, before you got your bicycle.

Hit ain' harf so diserp'intin' ter com home wid er em'ty fish-barsket as hi am ter start out wid er em'ty jug.

It is not drinking alone that leads the

good-natured man to ruin; it is drinking The woodman who takes to water is

not always at home in a chopping sea. "Speaking of Greece," said the barber,

"do you wish any on your hair?"

The professional boarder knows what it is to suffer at the steak.

A good pitcher makes a poor carver; he is apt to cut the plate.

The hypnotist is a strong believer in rapid trance-it.

### Literary Notes.

A book which should be of almost thrill by the J. B. Lippincott Company. It is entitled, "Water and its Purification." Among the valuable, if true, facts it sets forth is the one that "where the work of softening the water is artificially performed, it is estimated that the application of one cent's worth of lime will save an expenditure of about fourteen dollars for soap"-soft soap, presumably. The city of Glasgow, by its improved water supply, is said to have effected an estimated annual saving of about \$175,-000 in cost of soap alone. If this be true. Richmond, by imitating Glasgow, could soon retire the Retrenchment and Reform Committee from business. Says a review of the book: "So far as it is a compilation of the results attained in the economic parts of the task of purifying water, the book, though over brief, is good, and will be useful to those who desire to obtain general idea of the matter. It will show the engineer who has not been trained in sanitary hydraulies something of the difficulties which have to be met and the means of avoiding them. It may also

serve in an effective way to teach the layman the dangers which lurk in springs and wells and hydrants." The Critic of April 24th contains a column article by Professor James A. Harrison, of the University of Virginia, on the late Mrs. Margaret J. Preston. Professor Harrison says of Mrs. Preston that "she was, indeed, the poet laureate of Virginia." The article is a surpassingly warm tribute to the beloved poet. A new edition of "Georgia Scenes" will

be issued by Harper & Brothers. It will contain reproductions of the original illustrations. The same firm announces a book of recollections by Mrs. John Sherwood ("M. E. W. S."), entitled, "An Epistle to Posterity; Being Rambling Recollections of Many Years of My Life." The book will be published during this

"The Romance of Isabel, Lady Burton," with portraits, illustrations, and a number of letters from General Gordon, will be published in America by Dodd, Mead & Co., who also announce "The Personal Life of Queen Victoria," by Miss Tooley, fully illustrated, and "The Green Guess-

Book," a new volume of charades.

A notable book soon to be published by Messrs. Little, Brown & Co., will be a "History of the Royal Navy." commencing with the earliest times and coming down to 1898. It will be in five volumes, fully illustrated. Captain Alfred T. Mahan and Mr. Theodore Roosevelt are among the contributors.

Mr. Gladstone's "Later Gleanings, Theo Mr. Gladstone's Lett Greek and the "Concordance to the Greek Testament," edited by the Revs. W. F. Moulton and A. S. Gedden, will be published in Ameri-

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ca by Charles Scribner's Sons. The same firm will publish, also, in May, Mr. Richard Harding Davis's "Soldiers of For-

"A Woman's Part in a Revolution" is the title of a book to be published in this the title of a book to be published in this country by Longmans, Green & Co. It is by Mrs. John Hays Hammond, and gives an account of events at Johannesburg during the Jameson raid. It consists mainly of extracts from a diary which Mrs. Hammond kept with great diligence during the period described.

The McClure Company announces a new edition of the Bible, in four volumes, bearing the title of "The Self-Interpreting Bible." It will be illustrated with pearing the title of "The Self-Interpret-ing Bible." It will be illustrated with pletures of biblical scenes, the pletures being printed opposite the passages illus-

trated. That interesting family group, the Brontes, will have still another book devoted to them. It is by the Rev. Angus Mackay, and is called "The Brontes in Fact and Fiction."

Robert Barr, the popular story-writer, in writing of the short story in England, describes the conditions to which a shortstory-writer must conform to satisfy the editors and the public. One editor to whom he sent a story of 2,400 words wrote that he was pleased with the tale, and would accept it if Mr. Barr would expand it to 6,000 words. Mr. Barr replied that this was a 2,400-word idea, and not a 6,000-word idea. Another magazine editor sent him a note asking him to write a 5,000-word story. Mr. Barr answered that he would do so as soon as a 5,000-word idea came to him. story-writer must conform to satisfy the soon as a 5,000-word idea came to him. Mr. Barr, no doubt, thinks that he was very cute in these cases, else he wouldn' brag of them, but Anthony was a good deal cuter, and understood his business much better than Mr. Barr ong story that couldn't as well have been a short story, and he always got space-rates." Wherein may be an idea for Mr. Barr, if he should happen to see this paragraph. Good business con-sists in making the article meet the de-mand, and if John Bull likes watered fiction, and is willing to pay for it, why not let him have it?

The Southern States, an Illustrated Monthly Magazine Devoted to the South," contains in its April issue "Climate and Crops," by Dr. Charles W. Dabney, Jr., and "Finance and Philanthropy," by Edward Ingle, with a biographical sketch and portrait of the latter. Mr. Ingle was formerly connected with the Richmond Times.

Virginia authors are represented in the Cosmopolitan for May-Miss Molly Elliot Seawell, in "The History of the Lady Betty Stair," and Miss Frances Courtenay Baylor, in "Confessions of a

A friend calls our attention to a slip we made in saying last week that Frank R. Stockton is a Virginian. By referring R. Stockton is a Virginian. By referring to the same authority that our friend probably consulted, we find that he is correct in saying that Stockton was born in Philadelphia. However, we think that the author of "The Late Mrs. Null" should have been born in Virginia, if he wasn't. He is to the meaner, born should have been born in Virginia, if he wasn't. He is to the manner born, at Eight Soloists, The Wednesday Club,

any rate.
The Bookman criticises Queen Victoria for "splitting a harmiess infinitive."
Perhaps it is the prerogative of one whose reign reaches to infinity to do that sort of thing. Ask Albert Edward.
Besides, isn't it her own English, to do as she likes with? as she likes with?

The Bookman, in noticing the Critic's new publication, "The Month," asks "Why should any one pay 13 a year for th "Why should any one pay as a year to Critic when they can get practically the same reading in "The Month' for the subscription-price of \$1?" Aside from the fact that the Critic might properly ask why the editor of a literary journal should use such bad English, it is evi-dent that the Bookman is profoundly ignorant of the uses and value of the weekly edition of the modern up-to-date newspaper. How these literary folk love one another!

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